



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

California State Office

2800 Cottage Way, Suite W-1834

Sacramento, California 95825

www.ca.blm.gov



December 16, 2004

In Reply Refer To:
6840 (CA930)P

EMS TRANSMISSION: 12/16/04
Information Bulletin **No. CA-2005-023**

To: District Manager, California Desert

From: State Director

Subject: Proposed Rule to Designate Critical Habitat for Coachella Valley Milk-vetch **DD: 2/10/05**

On December 14, 2004, the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) published a notice (*Federal Register* 69:74468-74491) proposing critical habitat for the Coachella Valley milk-vetch (*Astragalus lentiginosus* var. *coachellae*). (See Attachment 1.) The proposed rule solicits information on several topics, including the reasons why any areas should or should not be designated as critical habitat and the potential economic or other impacts such designation may have on affected interests, particularly small entities. Of the 3,583 acres of proposed critical habitat for this species, 2,876 acres (all within the jurisdiction of the Palm Springs-South Coast Field Office) are administered by BLM.

Please review the proposed rule, and associated maps, and advise CA-930 (Attn: Ed Lorentzen) if you have comments or suggestions regarding the proposed critical habitat boundaries, or any other aspects of the proposed rule. The deadline for submitting comments to FWS is February 14, 2005. Please provide us with your comments, if any, in electronic format by the close of business February 10, 2005.

Now that critical habitat has been proposed for this species, the conference requirements of Section 7(a)(4) of the Endangered Species Act and its implementing regulations at 50 CFR 402.10 are applicable to any BLM actions likely to cause the destruction or adverse modification of proposed critical habitat. Additionally, the guidance in Manual Section 6840.06B1 calls for BLM to confer with FWS "... on any action that is likely to adversely affect a proposed species or proposed critical habitat." Any outstanding requests for formal consultation with FWS on the Coachella Valley milk-vetch should be updated to include conference on proposed critical habitat.

Questions regarding this proposed rule may be directed to Ed Lorentzen at (916) 978-4646.

Signed by:
Mike Pool
State Director

Authenticated by:
Richard A. Erickson
Records Management

Attachment

1 - Proposed Rule to Designate Critical Habitat for the Coachella Valley Milk-vetch (24 pp.)

Distribution

CA-660 (Attn: Gail Acheson)

WO-230, MS 204 LS (Attn: Peggy Olwell)